

Insecta, Hymenoptera, Sphecidae, *Prionyx pumilio* (Taschenberg, 1869): Distribution extension

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ABSTRACT: *Prionyx pumilio* (Taschenberg, 1869) was recorded in Argentina, Peru, Chile and Brazil (in state of Goiás), the last report being questioned in the past. The present note extends the distribution of *P. pumilio* to northeast Brazil, in state of Paraíba, so, the record from Goiás must not be considered doubtful. The present finding indicates that *P. pumilio* is associated with dry ecosystems at least in part of its geographic distribution.

Prionyx Vander Linden is a widespread genus with 59 described species (Pulawski 2009), 15 of which occur in the Neotropical Region (Amarante 2002). Bohart and Menke (1963) defined the '*Prionyx pumilio* species group' by the following features: (1) claws with two well-formed teeth; (2) metapleuron not channeled; (3) female clypeus entire; (4) male flagellum without fossulae. The group includes *Prionyx pumilio* (Taschenberg, 1869) and *Prionyx chilensis* (Spinola, 1851). The former species is easily distinguished from *P. chilensis* in (1) bearing white setae on the head and (2) first and second forewings submarginal cells receiving respectively the first and second recurrent veins. Head setae are black in *P. chilensis*, and the second and third submarginal cells of the forewings receiving respectively the first and second recurrent veins.

Occurrence of *P. pumilio* was recorded in Argentina, Peru and Chile (Willink 1951; Bohart and Menke 1963; see also Pulawski 2009) and there is a record from as far northward as central Brazil, state of Goiás, by Berland (1926). The latter record was questioned by Willink (1951), who said that *P. pumilio* is characteristically a sub-andean species and probably does not occur in that region. On the other hand, Amarante (2002) reported the occurrence of *P. pumilio* in the state of Goiás in his catalog of Neotropical sphecids and crabronids, possibly repeating Berland's record.

The present note extends the distribution of *P. pumilio* as far north as northeast Brazil, based on the examination of 18 females and 1 male collected by Cincinato Rory Gonçalves (in August, 1956) in the locality of Brandão Junco, city of Santa Luzia (06°52'20"S, 36°55'07"W), state of Paraíba. The material examined is deposited in the entomological collection of the Museu Nacional – Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The specimens examined perfectly match with the description of *P. pumilio* by Willink (1951, as *Neosphex pumilio*) and do not show significant morphological variation. The discovery of *P. pumilio* in northeast Brazil indicates that it is not a strictly sub-andean species, so

the record by Berland (1926) from the state of Goiás must not be considered doubtful based on Willink (1951) arguments. Remarkably, *P. pumilio* was recorded from two somewhat dry regions in Brazil; the state of Goiás, which is almost entirely covered by Cerrado Biome, a somewhat dry ecosystem, and the state of Paraíba, which is covered by semi-arid Biome of the Caatinga. Besides, *P. pumilio* was previously recorded in semi-arid environments in Argentina (e.g. Vasquez *et al.* 2008). Thus, *P. pumilio* is associated with dry ecosystems at least in part of its geographic distribution.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: I thank Wojciech Pulawski and Michael Ohl for valuable comments on the manuscript, and Fundação Carlos Chagas Filho de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado do Rio de Janeiro-FAPERJ for the post-doctoral grants (processes number E26 100-496 2009) and financial support (process number E26 110-554 2008).

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RECEIVED: February 2010

REVISED: March 2010

ACCEPTED: March 2010

PUBLISHED ONLINE: March 2010

EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY: Ana Lúcia Tourinho